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Happy Passover!

Tonight we gather together to celebrate Passover, our holiday of freedom. We will eat a great meal together, enjoy four glasses (at least!) of wine, and tell the story of our ancestors' liberation from slavery in Egypt. We welcome our friends and family members from other backgrounds to reflect with us on the meaning of freedom in all our lives and histories. We will consider the blessings in our lives, pledge to work harder at freeing those who still suffer, and begin to cast off the things in our own lives that oppress us.

As we get started, get comfortable! Find a pillow to help you recline. In ancient times, eating while lounging on a pillow or couch was a sign of freedom. We anticipate this seder should take about a half hour from start to dinner. Enjoy!

There's really no one right way to celebrate Passover. The important thing is to explore the story, raise questions, and share the experience with others.

JewishBoston.com and the Jewish Women's Archive have a common commitment to making it easier for people to participate in Jewish life. We hope this Haggadah helps you do this. You can download as many additional copies as you need at www.JewishBoston.com/passover. We'd love to know what you think; you can contact us by email at feedback@JewishBoston.com or jwa.org/contact.

The Jewish Women's Archive (JWA) is devoted to making known the stories, struggles, and achievements of Jewish women in North America. Weaving women's words and stories throughout this Haggadah will enrich your understanding of the past and help ensure a more inclusive future.

JWA's mission is to uncover, chronicle, and transmit to a broad public the rich history of American Jewish women. To learn more about what we do, visit JWA.org where you can explore an encyclopedia of Jewish women, educational materials that can be used for free, online exhibits, our lively blog, and numerous other resources for anyone interested in the experiences of American Jewish women, both celebrated and unheralded, past and present.

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The Order of the Seder

Our Passover meal is called a seder, which means “order” in Hebrew, because we go through 14 specific steps as we retell the story of our ancestors’ liberation from slavery in Egypt.

Some people like to begin their seder by reciting or singing the names of the 14 steps – this will help you keep track of how far away the main course is!

- Kiddush (the blessing over wine) | *kadeish* | קַדִּיֵּשׁ
- Ritual hand-washing in preparation for the seder | *urchatz* | וּרְחֹץ
- Dipping a green vegetable in salt water | *karpas* | כַּרְפָּס
- Breaking the middle matzah | *yachatz* | יַחַץ
- Telling the story of Passover | *magid* | מַגִּיד
- Ritual hand-washing in preparation for the meal | *rachtza* | רְחֹצָה
- The blessing over the meal and matzah | *motzi matzah* | מוֹצִיא מַצָּה
- Dipping the bitter herb in sweet charoset | *maror* | מָרֹר
- Eating a sandwich of matzah and bitter herb | *koreich* | כּוֹרֵךְ
- Eating the meal! | *shulchan oreich* | שְׁלֹחַן עוֹרֵךְ
- Finding and eating the Afikomen | *tzafoon* | צִפּוֹן
- Saying grace after the meal and inviting Elijah the Prophet | *bareich* | בָּרַךְ
- Singing songs that praise God | *hallel* | הַלֵּל
- Ending the seder and thinking about the future | *nirtzah* | נִרְצָה

Kiddush (the blessing over wine) | *kadeish* | קידוש

All Jewish celebrations, from holidays to weddings, include wine as a symbol of our joy – not to mention a practical way to increase that joy. The seder starts with wine and then gives us three more opportunities to refill our cup and drink.

Traditionally, the four cups represent God's four promises to the Israelites. God's first promise, "I will bring you out from under the burdens of Egypt" (Exodus 6:6), reminds us of the Jewish commitment to social justice and social welfare. While the first cup is poured, we honor Jewish women and men who, like **Gertrude Weil**, dedicated themselves to improving the lives of others.

Gertrude Weil's passion for equality and justice shaped the course of her long life. Inspired by Jewish teachings that "justice, mercy, [and] goodness were not to be held in a vacuum, but practiced in our daily lives," Weil stood courageously at the forefront of a wide range of progressive and often controversial causes. From the 1910s, when she campaigned for women's suffrage, to the 1960s, when she convened interracial meetings in her North Carolina home; from championing child labor legislation to creating parks and pools in underprivileged African-American neighborhoods; from teaching religious school to helping rescue Jewish refugees in the 1930s and 1940s, she worked to make her community a place that offered equal opportunity, dignity, and respect to all its residents.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן:

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ree hagafen.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who creates the fruit of the vine.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who gave us a heritage that endures through the ages, ever changing and ever meaningful. We thank You for the opportunities for holiness, the obligations of Your commandments, and the happiness of joyful holidays. Together we celebrate the Holiday of Matzah, the time of liberation, by reading our

sacred stories, remembering the Exodus from Egypt, and raising our voices in song. We praise God, who sanctifies the family of Israel and the holidays.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שֶׁהֵחֵינּוּ וְקִיָּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה:

*Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam,
she-hechyanu v'key'manu v'higiyanu lazman hazeh.*

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who has kept us alive,
raised us up, and brought us to this happy moment.

Drink the first glass of wine!

Ritual hand-washing in preparation for the seder | *urchatz* | וּרְחִיץ

Water is refreshing, cleansing, and clear, so it's easy to understand why so many cultures and religions use water for symbolic purification. We will wash our hands twice during our seder: now, with no blessing, to get us ready for the rituals to come; and then again later, we'll wash again with a blessing, preparing us for the meal, which Judaism thinks of as a ritual in itself. (The Jewish obsession with food is older than you thought!)

To wash your hands, you don't need soap, but you do need a cup to pour water over your hands. Pour water on each of your hands three times, alternating between your hands. If the people around your table don't want to get up to walk all the way over to the sink, you could pass a pitcher and a bowl around so everyone can wash at their seats... just be careful not to spill!

Too often during our daily lives we don't stop and take the moment to prepare for whatever it is we're about to do.



Let's pause to consider what we hope to get out of our evening together tonight. Go around the table and share one hope or expectation you have for tonight's seder.

Dipping a green vegetable in salt water | *karpas* | כָּרְפָּס

Passover, like many of our holidays, combines the celebration of an event from our Jewish memory with a recognition of the cycles of nature. As we remember the liberation from Egypt, we also recognize the stirrings of spring and rebirth happening in the world around us. The symbols on our table bring together elements of both kinds of celebration.

We now take a vegetable, representing our joy at the dawning of spring after our long, cold winter. Most families use a green vegetable such as parsley or celery, but some families from Eastern Europe have a tradition of using a boiled potato since greens were hard to come by at Passover time. Whatever symbol of spring and sustenance we're using, we now dip it into salt water, a symbol of the tears our ancestors shed as slaves. Before we eat it, we recite a short blessing:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה:

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ree ha-adama.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who creates the fruits of the earth.

We look forward to spring and the reawakening of flowers and greenery. They haven't been lost, just buried beneath the snow, getting ready for reappearance just when we most needed them.



We all have aspects of ourselves that sometimes get buried under the stresses of our busy lives. What has this winter taught us? What elements of our own lives do we hope to revive this spring?

Breaking the middle matzah | *yachatz* | יָחַץ

There are three pieces of matzah stacked on the table. We now break the middle matzah into two pieces. The host should wrap up the larger of the pieces and, at some point

between now and the end of dinner, hide it. This piece is called the *afikomen*, literally “dessert” in Greek. After dinner, the guests will have to hunt for the *afikomen* in order to wrap up the meal... and win a prize.

We eat matzah in memory of the quick flight of our ancestors from Egypt. As slaves, they had faced many false starts before finally being let go. So when the word of their freedom came, they took whatever dough they had and ran with it before it had the chance to rise, leaving it looking something like matzah.

Uncover and hold up the three pieces of matzah and say:

This is the bread of poverty which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. All who are hungry, come and eat; all who are needy, come and celebrate Passover with us. This year we are here; next year we will be in Israel. This year we are slaves; next year we will be free.

These days, matzah is a special food and we look forward to eating it on Passover. Imagine eating only matzah, or being one of the countless people around the world who don't have enough to eat.



What does the symbol of matzah say to us about oppression in the world, both people literally enslaved and the many ways in which each of us is held down by forces beyond our control? How does this resonate with events happening now?

Telling the story of Passover | *magid* | מגיד

Pour the second glass of wine for everyone.

The Haggadah doesn't tell the story of Passover in a linear fashion. We don't hear of Moses being found by the daughter of Pharaoh – actually, we don't hear much of Moses at all. Instead, we get an impressionistic collection of songs, images, and stories of both the Exodus from Egypt and from Passover celebrations through the centuries. Some say that minimizing the role of Moses keeps us focused on the miracles God performed for us. Others insist that we keep the focus on the role that every member of the community has in bringing about positive change.

Oral History

Why Now?

Oral history is an important tool for transmitting one generation's experiences, memories, and dreams to the next. During the *Maggid* portion of the seder, traditionally the youngest person present asks four questions about the rituals of Passover. By asking these questions and retelling the story of the Israelites' liberation from Egypt, Jews have ensured that the traditions and history of our people have been preserved for thousands of years.

Why Here?

Just as the Jews as a nation have a story to be told, so too does every community, family, and individual. The seder is a time to gather, celebrate, and remember. What stories do we at this table have to tell? Is there a tale of liberation or a memory for us to share tonight? What lessons can these stories teach us?

What do we ask?

Weave the stories of your family or community into your Passover tradition. Below you will find some questions to discuss during the seder.

For Everyone:

- What is your most distinct Passover memory? What smells, images, sounds, and tastes come to mind when you think of Passover?
- Which Passover ritual holds the greatest significance or meaning for you? Why?
- How has the celebration of Passover evolved over time in your family or community? (You might want to bring pictures of past seders.)
- Have there been times in your life when the Passover themes of liberation and redemption have been particularly resonant for you? If so, describe those times.

For Elders:

- How does this seder differ from those you attended as a child? Are there things you miss? New traditions you enjoy?
- Describe a family seder from your youth. What roles did men, women, and children play?
- How was Passover observed in the community in which you grew up?

The Four Questions

The formal telling of the story of Passover is framed as a discussion with lots of questions and answers. The tradition that the youngest person asks the questions reflects the centrality of involving everyone in the seder. The rabbis who created the set format for the seder gave us the Four Questions to help break the ice in case no one had their own questions. Asking questions is a core tradition in Jewish life. If everyone at your seder is around the same age, perhaps the person with the least seder experience can ask them – or everyone can sing them all together.

מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות?

Ma nishtana halaila hazeh mikol haleilot?

Why is this night different from all other nights?

שְׁבִיכֹל הַלֵּילֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין חֲמֵץ וּמַצָּה. הַלֵּל יֵלֶה הַזֶּה כָּלוּ מַצָּה:

Shebichol haleilot anu ochlin chameitz u-matzah. Halaila hazeh kulo matzah.

On all other nights we eat both leavened bread and matzah.

Tonight we only eat matzah.

שְׁבִיכֹל הַלֵּילֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין לְשָׂאֵר יִרְקוֹת הַלֵּל יֵלֶה הַזֶּה מָרוֹר:

Shebichol haleilot anu ochlin shi'ar yirakot haleila hazeh maror.

On all other nights we eat all kinds of vegetables, but tonight we eat bitter herbs.

שְׁבִיכֹל הַלֵּילֹת אֵין אָנוּ מַטְבִּילִין אֶפִּילוּ פֶּעַם אַחַת.

הַלֵּל יֵלֶה הַזֶּה לְשֵׁתִי פְעָמִים:

Shebichol haleilot ain anu matbilin afilu pa-am echat. Halaila hazeh shtei fi-amim.

On all other nights we aren't expected to dip our vegetables one time.
Tonight we do it twice.

שֶׁבִּיחַל הַלֵּילוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין בֵּין יוֹשְׁבִין וּבֵין מְסֻבִּין.
הַלֵּל יְלֵה הַזֶּה כָּל נֹו מְסֻבִּין:

Shebichol haleilot anu ochlin bein yoshein uvein m'subin. Halaila hazeh kulanu m'subin.

On all other nights we eat either sitting normally or reclining. Tonight we recline.

Alternative Four Questions

Traditionally, we ask why this night is different from all other nights. This variation on the Four Questions challenges us to think about why some things have changed so little:

1. Why is "JAP" still such a popular put-down?
2. When women make up the majority of Jewish professionals, why are most Jewish communal organizations still led by men?
3. When will people stop thinking it's only important for girls – and not boys – to learn about Jewish women's history?
4. Why on this holiday, with its theme of liberation, are most seders still led by men and served by women?

Answering Our Questions

As all good term papers do, we start with the main idea:

עֲבָדִים הָיינוּ הָיינוּ. עַתָּה בְּנֵי חוֹרִין:

Avadim hayinu hayinu. Ata b'nei chorin.

We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt. Now we are free.

We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and God took us from there with a strong hand and outstretched arm. Had God not brought our ancestors out of Egypt, then even today we and our children and our grandchildren would still be slaves. Even if we were

all wise, knowledgeable scholars and Torah experts, we would still be obligated to tell the story of the exodus from Egypt.

The Four Children

As we tell the story, we think about it from all angles. Our tradition speaks of four different types of children who might react differently to the Passover seder. It is our job to make our story accessible to all the members of our community, so we think about how we might best reach each type of child:

What does the wise child say? The wise child asks, What are the testimonies and laws which God commanded you?

You must teach this child the rules of observing the holiday of Passover.

What does the wicked child say? The wicked child asks, What does this service mean to *you*?

To *you* and not to *himself*! Because he takes himself out of the community and misses the point, set this child's teeth on edge and say to him:

"It is because of what God did for *me* in taking me out of Egypt."

Me, not *him*. Had that child been there, he would have been left behind.

What does the simple child say? The simple child asks, What is this?

To this child, answer plainly:

"With a strong hand God took us out of Egypt, where we were slaves."

What about the child who doesn't know how to ask a question? Help this child ask. Start telling the story:

"It is because of what God did for me in taking me out of Egypt."



Do you see yourself in any of these children? At times we all approach different situations like each of these children. How do we relate to each of them?

The Four Daughters

Around our tables sit four daughters.

Wise Daughter

The Wise daughter understands that not everything is as it appears.

She is the one who speaks up, confident that her opinion counts. She is the one who can take the tradition and ritual that is placed before her, turn it over and over, and find personal meaning in it. She is the one who can find the secrets in the empty spaces between the letters of the Torah.

She is the one who claims a place for herself even if the men do not make room for her.

Some call her wise and accepting. We call her creative and assertive. We welcome creativity and assertiveness to sit with us at our tables and inspire us to act.

Wicked Daughter

The Wicked daughter is the one who dares to challenge the simplistic answers she has been given.

She is the one who asks too many questions. She is the one not content to remain in her prescribed place. She is the one who breaks the mold. She is the one who challenges the status quo.

Some call her wicked and rebellious. We call her daring and courageous. We welcome rebellion to sit with us at our tables and make us uneasy.

Simple Daughter

The Simple daughter is the one who accepts what she is given without asking for more.

She is the one who trusts easily and believes what she is told. She is the one who prefers waiting and watching over seeking and acting. She is the one who believes that the redemption from Egypt was the final act of freedom. She is the one who follows in the footsteps of others.

Some call her simple and naive. We call her the one whose eyes are yet to be opened. We welcome the contented one to sit with us at our tables and appreciate what will still to come.

Daughter Who Does Not Know How to Ask

Last is the daughter who does not know how to ask.

She is one who obeys and does not question. She is the one who has accepted men's definitions of the world. She is the one who has not found her own voice. She is the one who is content to be invisible.

Some call her subservient and oppressed. We call her our sister. We welcome the silent one to sit with us at our tables and experience a community that welcomes the voices of women.

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Telling Our Story

Our story starts in ancient times, with Abraham, the first person to have the idea that maybe all those little statues his contemporaries worshiped as gods were just statues. The idea of one God, invisible and all-powerful, inspired him to leave his family and begin a new people in Canaan, the land that would one day bear his grandson Jacob's adopted name, Israel.

God had made a promise to Abraham that his family would become a great nation, but this promise came with a frightening vision of the troubles along the way: "Your descendants will dwell for a time in a land that is not their own, and they will be enslaved and afflicted for four hundred years; however, I will punish the nation that enslaved them, and afterwards they shall leave with great wealth."

Raise the glass of wine and say:

וְהִיא שְׁעָמְדָה לְאַבֹּתֵינוּ, יְנוּ וְלֵנוּ.

V'hi she-amda l'avoteinu v'lanu.

This promise has sustained our ancestors and us.

For not only one enemy has risen against us to annihilate us, but in every generation there are those who rise against us. But God saves us from those who seek to harm us.

The glass of wine is put down.

In the years our ancestors lived in Egypt, our numbers grew, and soon the family of Jacob became the People of Israel. Pharaoh and the leaders of Egypt grew alarmed by this great nation growing within their borders, so they enslaved us. We were forced to perform hard labor, perhaps even building pyramids. The Egyptians feared that even as slaves, the Israelites might grow strong and rebel. So Pharaoh decreed that Israelite baby boys should be drowned, to prevent the Israelites from overthrowing those who had enslaved them.

The Passover story is most often associated with the leadership of Moses, but in fact the cycle of protest that culminated in the Exodus from Egypt began with the courageous acts of two women who disobeyed Pharaoh's decree to murder all Hebrew male babies born in Egypt. These women, Shifra and Puah, practiced a bold and noteworthy profession—midwifery. It was their commitment to preserving human life and their skills as midwives that provided the safe and secret delivery of Hebrew baby boys. That the biblical text actually mentions Shifra and Puah by name suggests the ultimate importance of their role in the liberation of the Israelites.

God heard the cries of the Israelites. And God brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand and outstretched arm, with great awe, miraculous signs and wonders. God brought us out not by angel or messenger, but through God's own intervention.

The Ten Plagues

As we rejoice at our deliverance from slavery, we acknowledge that our freedom was hard-earned. We regret that our freedom came at the cost of the Egyptians' suffering, for we are all human beings made in the image of God. We pour out a drop of wine for each of the plagues as we recite them.

Dip a finger or a spoon into your wine glass for a drop for each plague.

These are the ten plagues which God brought down on the Egyptians:

Blood | *dam* | דָּם

Frogs | *tzfardeiya* | צְפַרְדֵּי, עַ

Lice | *kinim* | כִּנִּים

Beasts | *arov* | עֲרוֹב

Cattle disease | *dever* | דֶּבֶר, בָּרָא

Boils | *sh'chin* | שְׁחִין

Hail | *barad* | בָּרָד

Locusts | *arbeh* | אֲרֵבָה

Darkness | *choshech* | חֹשֶׁךְ

Death of the Firstborn | *makat b'chorot* | מַכַּת בְּכוֹרוֹת



The Egyptians needed ten plagues because after each one they were able to come up with excuses and explanations rather than change their behavior. Could we be making the same mistakes? Make up your own list. What are the plagues in your life? What are the plagues in our world today? What behaviors do we need to change to fix them?

Ten Modern Plagues

The traditional Haggadah lists ten plagues that afflicted the Egyptians. We live in a very different world, but Passover is a good time to remember that, even after our liberation from slavery in Egypt, there are still many challenges for us to meet. Here are ten “modern plagues”:

Inequity

Access to affordable housing, quality healthcare, nutritious food, good schools, and higher education is far from equal. The disparity between rich and poor is growing, and opportunities for upward mobility are limited.

Entitlement

Too many people consider themselves entitled to material comfort, economic security, and other privileges of middle-class life without hard work.

Fear

Fear of “the other” produces and reinforces xenophobia, anti-immigrant sentiment, antisemitism, homophobia, and transphobia.

Greed

Profits are a higher priority than the safety of workers or the health of the environment. The top one percent of the American population controls 42% of the country’s financial wealth, while corporations send jobs off-shore and American workers’ right to organize and bargain collectively is threatened.

Distraction

In this age of constant connectedness, we are easily distracted by an unending barrage of information, much of it meaningless, with no way to discern what is important.

Distortion of reality

The media constructs and society accepts unrealistic expectations, leading to eating disorders and an unhealthy obsession with appearance for both men and women.

Unawareness

It is easy to be unaware of the consequences our consumer choices have for the

environment and for workers at home and abroad. Do we know where or how our clothes are made? Where or how our food is produced? The working conditions? The impact on the environment?

Discrimination

While we celebrate our liberation from bondage in Egypt, too many people still suffer from discrimination. For example, blacks in the United States are imprisoned at more than five times the rate of whites, and Hispanics are locked up at nearly double the white rate. Women earn 77 cents for every dollar earned by a man. At 61 cents to the dollar, the disparity is even more shocking in Jewish communal organization.

Silence

Every year, 4.8 million cases of domestic violence against American women are reported. We do not talk about things that are disturbing, such as rape, sex trafficking, child abuse, domestic violence, and elder abuse, even though they happen every day in our own communities.

Feeling overwhelmed and disempowered

When faced with these modern “plagues,” how often do we doubt or question our own ability to make a difference? How often do we feel paralyzed because we do not know what to do to bring about change?

Dayeinu

The plagues and our subsequent redemption from Egypt are but one example of the care God has shown for us in our history. Had God but done any one of these kindnesses, it would have been enough – *dayeinu*.

אלו הוציאנו ממצר, ים, דֵּינוּ:

Ilu hotzi- hotzianu, Hotzianu mi-mitzrayim Hotzianu mi-mitzrayim, Dayeinu

If God had only taken us out of Egypt, that would have been enough!

אֱלֹהֵינוּ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה, דַּיֵּינוּ:

Ilu natan natan lanu, natan lanu et ha-Torah, Natan lanu et ha-Torah , Dayeinu

If God had only given us the Torah, that would have been enough.

The complete lyrics to *Dayeinu* tell the entire story of the Exodus from Egypt as a series of miracles God performed for us. (See the Additional Readings if you want to read or sing them all.)

Dayeinu also reminds us that each of our lives is the cumulative result of many blessings, small and large.

The Passover Symbols

We have now told the story of Passover... but wait! We're not quite done. There are still some symbols on our seder plate we haven't talked about yet. Rabban Gamliel would say that whoever didn't explain the shank bone, matzah, and *marror* (or bitter herbs) hasn't done Passover justice.

The shank bone represents the *Pesach*, the special lamb sacrifice made in the days of the Temple for the Passover holiday. It is called the *pesach*, from the Hebrew word meaning "to pass over," because God passed over the houses of our ancestors in Egypt when visiting plagues upon our oppressors.

The matzah reminds us that when our ancestors were finally free to leave Egypt, there was no time to pack or prepare. Our ancestors grabbed whatever dough was made and set out on their journey, letting their dough bake into matzah as they fled.

The bitter herbs provide a visceral reminder of the bitterness of slavery, the life of hard labor our ancestors experienced in Egypt.

The Orange

Even after one has encountered the collection of seemingly unconnected foods on the seder plate year after year, it's fun to ask what it's all about. Since each item is supposed

to spur discussion, it makes sense that adding something new has been one way to introduce contemporary issues to a seder.

So how was it that the orange found its place on the seder plate as a Passover symbol of feminism and women's rights?

The most familiar version of the story features Susannah Heschel, daughter of Abraham Joshua Heschel and scholar in her own right, giving a speech about the ordination of women clergy. From the audience, a man declared, "A woman belongs on the *bima* like an orange belongs on the seder plate!" However, Heschel herself tells a different story.

During a visit to Oberlin College in the early 1980s, she read a feminist Haggadah that called for placing a piece of bread on the seder plate as a symbol of the need to include gays and lesbians in Jewish life. Heschel liked the idea of putting something new on the seder plate to represent suppressed voices, but she was uncomfortable with using *chametz*, which she felt would invalidate the very ritual it was meant to enhance. She chose instead to add an orange and to interpret it as a symbol of all marginalized populations.

Miriam's Cup

A decade later, the ritual of Miriam's Cup emerged as another way to honor women during the seder. Miriam's Cup builds upon the message of the orange, transforming the seder into an empowering and inclusive experience.

Although Miriam, a prophet and the sister of Moses, is never mentioned in the traditional Haggadah text, she is one of the central figures in the Exodus story.

According to Jewish feminist writer Tamara Cohen, the practice of filling a goblet with water to symbolize Miriam's inclusion in the seder originated at a Rosh Chodesh group in Boston in 1989. The idea resonated with many people and quickly spread.

Miriam has long been associated with water. The rabbis attribute to Miriam the well that traveled with the Israelites throughout their wandering in the desert. In the Book of Numbers, the well dries up immediately following Miriam's death. Of course, water played a role in Miriam's life from the first time we meet her, watching over the infant Moses on the Nile, through her triumphant crossing of the Red Sea.

There is no agreed-upon ritual for incorporating Miriam's Cup into the seder, but there are three moments in the seder that work particularly well with Miriam's story.

1. As Moses's sister, Miriam protected him as an infant and made sure he was safely received by Pharaoh's daughter. Some seders highlight this moment by invoking her name at the start of the *Maggid* section when we begin telling the Passover story.
2. Other seders, such as this one, incorporate Miriam's cup when we sing songs of praise during the *Maggid* and later during the *Hallel* as a reminder that Miriam led the Israelites in song and dance during the Exodus.
3. Still others place Miriam's Cup alongside the cup we put out for Elijah.

Just as there is no set time in the seder to use Miriam's Cup, there is no set ritual or liturgy either. Some fill the cup with water at the start of the seder; others fill the cup during the seder. Some sing Debbie Friedman's "Miriam's Song"; others sing "Miriam Ha-Neviah." As with all seder symbols, Miriam's Cup is most effective when it inspires discussion.

What does Miriam mean to you? How do all of her roles, as sister, protector, prophet, leader, singer, and dancer, contribute to our understanding of the Exodus story? Who are the Miriams of today?

In Every Generation

בְּכָל-דּוֹר וָדּוֹר חַיֵּב אָדָם לִרְאוֹת אֶת-עַצְמוֹ, כְּאִלּוּ הוּא יָצָא מִמִּצְרָיִם.

B'chol dor vador chayav adam lirot et-atzmo, k'ilu hu yatzav mimitzrayim.

**In every generation, everyone is obligated to see themselves
as though they personally left Egypt.**

The seder reminds us that it was not only our ancestors whom God redeemed; God redeemed us too along with them. That's why the Torah says "God brought us out from there in order to lead us to and give us the land promised to our ancestors."

The Second Glass of Wine

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who redeemed us and our ancestors from Egypt, enabling us to reach this night and eat *matzah* and bitter herbs. May we continue to reach future holidays in peace and happiness.

The second cup represents God's second promise to the Israelites: "I will deliver you from bondage" (Exodus 6:6). Tonight we recognize the commitment of Jewish women and men who, like **Clara Lemlich**, worked to free others from oppression in its many forms.

Like many other immigrants from Eastern Europe, Clara Lemlich found work in one of New York City's garment shops. As a girl in Russia, she had secretly read communist literature and by the age of 17, considered herself a committed revolutionary. From her first day on the job, Lemlich found working conditions in the garment factory intolerable. She soon started to organize her fellow workers into an all-female chapter of the recently formed International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. She led her co-workers on strike several times. In 1909, her call to action set off the general strike of garment workers known as the "Uprising of the 20,000," which transformed the American labor movement. Throughout her life, her activist spirit never wavered. In her eighties, she helped her nursing home's orderlies form a union and persuaded the home's administrators to participate in the United Farm Workers grape boycott.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן:

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ree hagafen.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Drink the second glass of wine!

Ritual hand-washing in preparation for the meal | *rachtza* | רְחִיצָה

As we now transition from the formal telling of the Passover story to the celebratory meal, we once again wash our hands to prepare ourselves. In Judaism, a good meal together with friends and family is itself a sacred act, so we prepare for it just as we prepared for our holiday ritual, recalling the way ancient priests once prepared for service in the Temple.

Some people distinguish between washing to prepare for prayer and washing to prepare for food by changing the way they pour water on their hands. For washing before food, pour water three times on your right hand and then three times on your left hand.

After you have poured the water over your hands, recite this short blessing.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ
עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם:

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al n'tilat yadayim.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who made us holy through obligations, commanding us to wash our hands.

The blessing over the meal and matzah | *motzi matzah* | מוֹצִיא מַצָּה

The familiar *hamotzi* blessing marks the formal start of the meal. Because we are using matzah instead of bread, we add a blessing celebrating this *mitzvah*.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצִיא לָנוּ לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ:

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, hamotzi lechem min ha-aretz.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who brings bread from the land.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתַי וְצִוָּנוּ עַל
אֲכִילַת מַצָּה:

*Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu
al achilat matzah.*

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who made us holy through obligations,
commanding us to eat matzah.

Distribute and eat the top and middle matzah for everyone to eat.

מָרֹר | **Dipping the bitter herb in sweet charoset | maror**

In creating a holiday about the joy of freedom, we turn the story of our bitter history into a sweet celebration. We recognize this by dipping our bitter herbs into the sweet *charoset*. We don't totally eradicate the taste of the bitter with the taste of the sweet... but doesn't the sweet mean more when it's layered over the bitterness?

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל
אֲכִילַת מָרֹר:

*Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu
al achilat maror.*

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who made us holy through obligations,
commanding us to eat bitter herbs.

כּוֹרֵךְ | **Eating a sandwich of matzah and bitter herb | koreich**

When the Temple stood in Jerusalem, the biggest ritual of them all was eating the lamb offered as the *pesach* or Passover sacrifice. The great sage Hillel would put the meat in a sandwich made of matzah, along with some of the bitter herbs. While we do not make

sacrifices any more – and, in fact, some Jews have a custom of purposely avoiding lamb during the seder so that it is not mistaken as a sacrifice – we honor this custom by eating a sandwich of the remaining matzah and bitter herbs. Some people will also include *charoset* in the sandwich to remind us that God's kindness helped relieve the bitterness of slavery.

Eating the meal! | *shulchan oreich* | נשלתן עורר

Enjoy! But don't forget when you're done we've got a little more seder to go, including the final two cups of wine!

Finding and eating the Afikomen | *tzafoon* | צפון

The playfulness of finding the afikomen reminds us that we balance our solemn memories of slavery with a joyous celebration of freedom. As we eat the afikomen, our last taste of matzah for the evening, we are grateful for moments of silliness and happiness in our lives.

Saying grace after the meal and inviting Elijah the Prophet | *bareich* | ברך

Refill everyone's wine glass.

We now say grace after the meal, thanking God for the food we've eaten. On Passover, this becomes something like an extended toast to God, culminating with drinking our third glass of wine for the evening:

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, whose goodness sustains the world. You are the origin of love and compassion, the source of bread for all. Thanks to You, we need never lack for food; You provide food enough for everyone. We praise God, source of food for everyone.

As it says in the Torah: When you have eaten and are satisfied, give praise to your God who has given you this good earth. We praise God for the earth and for its sustenance.

Renew our spiritual center in our time. We praise God, who centers us.

May the source of peace grant peace to us, to the Jewish people, and to the entire world. Amen.

The Third Glass of Wine

The third cup of wine represents God's third promise to the Israelites: "I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and great judgments" (Exodus 6:6). Here we recognize the Jewish women and men whom, like **Ruth Bader Ginsburg**, we trust and empower to make legal judgments.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg was born in 1933 in Brooklyn, NY. She earned a scholarship to Cornell, where she graduated first in her class. She attended Harvard and then Columbia Law Schools, making law review at each and again graduating at the top of her class. Despite her record of achievement, Ginsburg still had great difficulty finding a job as a lawyer upon graduation due to discrimination she faced as a woman. However, she eventually went on to become the first tenured female professor at Columbia Law School. She also took on many cases involving issues of gender discrimination. In 1981, President Jimmy Carter appointed her to the D.C. Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. Two years later, President Clinton made Ginsburg his first appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court. When she was sworn in on August 10, 1993, she became the second woman, and the first Jewish woman, to serve on the Supreme Court.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן:

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ree hagafen.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Drink the third glass of wine!

The Cup of Elijah

We now refill our wine glasses one last time and open the front door to invite the prophet Elijah to join our seder. In the Bible, Elijah was a fierce defender of God to a disbelieving people. At the end of his life, rather than dying, he was whisked away to heaven. Tradition holds that he will return in advance of messianic days to herald a new era of peace, so we set a place for Elijah at many joyous, hopeful Jewish occasions, such as a baby's bris and the Passover seder.

*Eliyahu hanavi,
Eliyahu hatishbi
Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu hagiladi
Bimheirah b'yameinu, yavo eileinu
Im mashiach ben-David,
Im mashiach ben-David*

Elijah the prophet, the returning,
the man of Gilad:
return to us speedily, in our days
with the messiah, son of David.

אֱלֹהֵי הוּא הַנָּבִיא, אֱלֹהֵי הוּא הַתְּשֻׁבִּי,
אֱלֹהֵי הוּא, אֱלֹהֵי הוּא, אֱלֹהֵי הוּא הַגִּלְעָדִי.
בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ יָבוֹא אֵלֵינוּ
עִם מָשִׁיחַ, יֵשׁ בֶּן דָּוִד,
עִם מָשִׁיחַ, יֵשׁ בֶּן דָּוִד.

Singing songs that praise God | *hallel* | הלל

This is the time set aside for singing. Some of us might sing traditional prayers from the Book of Psalms. Others take this moment for favorites like Chad Gadya & Who Knows One, which you can find in the appendix. To celebrate the theme of freedom, we might sing songs from the Civil Rights Movement. Or perhaps your crazy Uncle Frank has some parody lyrics about Passover to the tunes from a musical. We're at least three glasses of wine into the night, so just roll with it.

Debbie Friedman and "Miriam's Song"

If Hallel is traditionally a time to sing songs in praise of God, what better song to sing than "Miriam's Song," which recalls the jubilant dancing and singing of Israelite

women led by Miriam after the miracle at the Red Sea. The singer-songwriter **Debbie Friedman** (1951-2011) gave Miriam the Prophet new life with this song, bringing women and girls of all ages to their feet to celebrate Miriam's leadership. Friedman transformed American Jewish liturgy and music by taking prayers, stories, and texts from the tradition and making them accessible through her contemporary, folky songs, which have been so fully integrated into synagogue practice as to be considered "traditional" by many. Friedman recorded more than 20 albums and performed her music around the world, in venues as lofty as Carnegie Hall and as informal as summer camp dining halls. Though she died an untimely death in January 2011, her music continues to resonate through the sanctuaries of synagogues world-wide.

Fourth Glass of Wine

As we come to the end of the seder, we drink one more glass of wine.

The fourth cup represents God's final promise to the Israelites: "I will take you to be my people and I will be your God" (Exodus 6:7). Tonight we recognize the Jewish women and men who, like **Grace Paley**, nurture our creative souls and strengthen our understanding of community.

Grace Paley, feminist author and activist, was born on December 11, 1922, in the Bronx. She wrote three highly acclaimed collections of short fiction, as well as three books of poetry, and taught at the City College of New York, Sarah Lawrence, and Dartmouth. Raised by socialist parents who had fled persecution in Czarist Russia, at a young age Paley began taking progressive stands and expressing concern for the underdog. Her career as a political activist began in her native New York, but she was involved for many decades in the national anti-war, anti-nuclear, and feminist movements. In 1986, Governor Mario Cuomo made Paley the first official New York State Writer. Her work gives voice to ordinary women, many of whom are Jewish, and illuminates the nature of everyday life and the intricacies of relationships, love, family, and community.

With this final cup, we give thanks for the experience of celebrating Passover together, for the traditions that help inform our daily lives and guide our actions and aspirations.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן:

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ree hagafen.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Drink the fourth and final glass of wine!

נִרְצָה | *nirtzah* | Ending the seder and thinking about the future

Nirtzah marks the conclusion of the seder. Our bellies are full, we have had several glasses of wine, we have told stories and sung songs, and now it is time for the evening to come to close. At the end of the seder, we honor the tradition of declaring, "Next year in Jerusalem!"

For some people, the recitation of this phrase expresses the anticipation of rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem and the return of the Messiah. For others, it is an affirmation of hope and of connectedness with *Klal Yisrael*, the whole of the Jewish community. Still others yearn for peace in Israel and for all those living in the Diaspora.

Though it comes at the end of the seder, this moment also marks a beginning. We are beginning the next season with a renewed awareness of the freedoms we enjoy and the obstacles we must still confront. We are looking forward to the time that we gather together again. Having retold stories of the Jewish people, recalled historic movements of liberation, and reflected on the struggles people still face for freedom and equality, we are ready to embark on a year that we hope will bring positive change in the world and freedom to people everywhere.

In *The Leader's Guide to the Family Participation Haggadah: A Different Night*, Rabbi David Hartman writes: "Passover is the night for reckless dreams; for visions about what a human being can be, what society can be, what people can be, what history may become."

What can *we* do to fulfill the “reckless dreams” of Gertrude Weil, Clara Lemlich, Ruth Bader Ginsberg, and Grace Paley?

What can *we* do to fulfill our own reckless dreams? What will be our legacy for future generations?

Our seder is over, according to Jewish tradition and law. As we had the pleasure to gather for a seder this year, we hope to once again have the opportunity in the years to come. We pray that God brings health and healing to Israel and all the people of the world, especially those impacted by natural tragedy and war. As we say...

לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם:

L'shana haba-ah biy'rushalayim

NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM!

Additional Readings/Songs

Dayeinu

If God had taken us out of Egypt,
And not judged the Egyptians,
That would have been enough.

If God had judging the Egyptians,
And not done the same to their gods,
That would have been enough.

If God had judged the Egyptian gods,
And not enacted the plague of the
death of the first born,
That would have been enough.

If God had enacted the plague of the
death of the first born,
And not given us the spoils,
That would have been enough.

If God had given us the spoils,
And not split the Red Sea,
That would have been enough.

If God had split the Red Sea,
And not helped us pass through the
middle,
That would have been enough.

If God had helped us pass through the
middle of the Red Sea,
And not closed it over our pursuers,
That would have been enough.

If God had closed the sea over our
pursuers,
And not kept us going through our 40
years of wandering in the desert,
That would have been enough.

If God had kept us going through our 40
years of wandering in the desert,
And not fed us manna,
That would have been enough.

If God had fed us manna,
And not given us Shabbat for rest,
That would have been enough.

If God had given us Shabbat,
And not brought us to Mount Sinai,
That would have been enough.

If God had brought us to Mount Sinai,
And not given us the Torah,
That would have been enough.

If God had given us the Torah,
And not let us enter the promised land
of Israel,
That would have been enough.

If God let us enter the promised land of
Israel,
And not built the Temple for us,
That would have been enough!

Who knows one?

At some seders, people go around the table reading a question and the answers in one breath. Thirteen is hard!

Who knows one?

I know one.

One is our God in Heaven and Earth

Who knows two?

I know two.

Two are the tablets of the covenant

One is our God in Heaven and Earth

Who knows two?

I know two.

Three are the patriarchs

Two are the tablets of the covenant

One is our God in Heaven and Earth

Who knows four?

I know four.

Four are the matriarchs

Three are the patriarchs

Two are the tablets of the covenant

One is our God in Heaven and Earth

Who knows five?

I know five.

Five are the books of the Torah

Four are the matriarchs

Three are the patriarchs

Two are the tablets of the covenant

One is our God in Heaven and Earth

Who knows six?

I know six.

Six are the orders of the Mishnah

Five are the books of the Torah

Four are the matriarchs

Three are the patriarchs

Two are the tablets of the covenant

One is our God in Heaven and Earth

Who knows seven?

I know seven.

Seven are the days of the week

Six are the orders of the Mishnah

Five are the books of the Torah

Four are the matriarchs

Three are the patriarchs

Two are the tablets of the covenant

One is our God in Heaven and Earth

Who knows eight?

I know eight.

Eight are the days for circumcision

Seven are the days of the week

Six are the orders of the Mishnah

Five are the books of the Torah

Four are the matriarchs

Three are the patriarchs

Two are the tablets of the covenant

One is our God in Heaven and Earth

Who knows nine?

I know nine.

Nine are the months of childbirth
Eight are the days for circumcision
Seven are the days of the week
Six are the orders of the Mishnah
Five are the books of the Torah
Four are the matriarchs
Three are the patriarchs
Two are the tablets of the covenant
One is our God in Heaven and Earth

Who knows ten?

I know ten.

Ten are the Words from Sinai
Nine are the months of childbirth
Eight are the days for circumcision
Seven are the days of the week
Six are the orders of the Mishnah
Five are the books of the Torah
Four are the matriarchs
Three are the patriarchs
Two are the tablets of the covenant
One is our God in Heaven and Earth

Who knows eleven?

I know eleven.

Eleven are the stars
Ten are the Words from Sinai
Nine are the months of childbirth
Eight are the days for circumcision
Seven are the days of the week
Six are the orders of the Mishnah
Five are the books of the Torah
Four are the matriarchs
Three are the patriarchs
Two are the tablets of the covenant

One is our God in Heaven and Earth

Who knows twelve?

I know twelve.

Twelve are the tribes
Eleven are the stars
Ten are the Words from Sinai
Nine are the months of childbirth
Eight are the days for circumcision
Seven are the days of the week
Six are the orders of the Mishnah
Five are the books of the Torah
Four are the matriarchs
Three are the patriarchs
Two are the tablets of the covenant
One is our God in Heaven and Earth

Who knows thirteen?

I know thirteen

Thirteen are the attributes of God
Twelve are the tribes
Eleven are the stars
Ten are the Words from Sinai
Nine are the months of childbirth
Eight are the days for circumcision
Seven are the days of the week
Six are the orders of the Mishnah
Five are the books of the Torah
Four are the matriarchs
Three are the patriarchs
Two are the tablets of the covenant
One is our God in Heaven and Earth

Chad Gadya

חַד גַּדְיָא, חַד גַּדְיָא
דִּזְבִּין אַבָּא בִּתְרֵי זֻזִי,
חַד גַּדְיָא, חַד גַּדְיָא.

Chad gadya, chad gadya
Dizabin abah bitrei zuzei
Chad gadya, chad gadya.

One little goat, one little goat:
Which my father brought for two *zuzim*.

One little goat, one little goat:
The cat came and ate the goat,
Which my father brought for two *zuzim*.

One little goat, one little goat:
The dog came and bit the cat
That ate the goat,
Which my father brought for two *zuzim*.

One little goat, one little goat:
The stick came and beat the dog
That bit the cat that ate the goat,
Which my father brought for two *zuzim*.

One little goat, one little goat:
The fire came and burned the stick
That beat the dog that bit the cat
That ate the goat,
Which my father brought for two *zuzim*.

One little goat, one little goat:
The water came and extinguished the
Fire that burned the stick
That beat the dog that bit the cat

That ate the goat,
Which my father bought for two *zuzim*.

One little goat, one little goat:
The ox came and drank the water
That extinguished the fire
That burned the stick that beat the dog
That bit the cat that ate the goat,
Which my father brought for two *zuzim*.

One little goat, one little goat:
The butcher came and killed the ox,
That drank the water
That extinguished the fire
That burned the stick that beat the dog
That bit the cat that ate the goat,
Which my father brought for two *zuzim*.

One little goat, one little goat:
The angle of death came and slew
The butcher who killed the ox,
That drank the water
That extinguished the fire
That burned the stick that beat the dog
That bit the cat that ate the goat,
Which my father brought for two *zuzim*.

One little goat, one little goat:
The Holy One, Blessed Be He came and
Smote the angle of death who slew
The butcher who killed the ox,
That drank the water
That extinguished the fire
That burned the stick that beat the dog
That bit the cat that ate the goat,
Which my father brought for two *zuzim*.